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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/04/2019  
TAGS: [KACT](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [RS](#) [US](#) [START](#)  
SUBJECT: START FOLLOW-ON NEGOTIATIONS, GENEVA (SFO-GVA-VI):  
(U) REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE-007 - CONCENTRATION OF MOBILE  
ICBMS DURING INSPECTIONS OF SOA AT OPERATIONAL BASES  
INCLUDING THE DEPLOYED NUCLEAR WARHEADS

Classified By: A/S Rose E. Gottemoeller, United States  
START Negotiator. Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (U) This is SFO-GVA-VI-047 -- Request for Guidance-007.

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SUMMARY AND GUIDANCE REQUESTED  
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12. (S) The Russian delegation is strongly resisting the inclusion in the START Follow-on (SFO) Treaty of any "special" provisions focused on constraining mobile ICBMs. The delegation believes that it would facilitate our securing agreement to those provisions we really need if we show some flexibility regarding certain provisions pertaining to mobile ICBM systems. Specifically, the delegation seeks flexibility regarding the requirement to "concentrate" mobile systems deployed in the field back to the restricted areas where they are based within 24 hours of designation by an inspection team that their base will be inspected to confirm the accuracy of data on the number and types of items of inspection located there. Background and analysis is in paragraphs 3-12. Recommendations are in paragraph 13. Guidance requested is in paragraph 14.

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BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS  
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13. (S) Mobile ICBMs achieve survivability by successfully avoiding detection when deployed in the field. In addition,

mobile ICBM systems have a unique capability to disperse quickly from their restricted areas (RA). During the latter part of the inspection regime for INF, Russia routinely dispersed substantial numbers of its mobile systems from their RAs upon learning that a U.S. on-site inspection was imminent, thus demonstrating an ability to disperse from their RAs before pre-inspection movement restrictions went into effect. A desire to discourage such a dispersal, combined with a desire to facilitate efforts with national technical means (NTM) to detect a covertly deployed mobile ICBM force, led to the inclusion within the START Treaty of a provision that requires all mobile ICBMs deployed in the field to "concentrate" back in their RAs once a mobile ICBM base had been officially designated for the conduct of a data update inspection.

¶4. (S) For START data update inspections, all mobile ICBM launchers, with the exception of those located at the maintenance facility or engaged in relocation, are required to "concentrate," that is, to return to their assigned restricted areas (RAs) within 24 hours after an inspection has been officially declared for their base, putting these launchers back in their RAs prior to the beginning of an inspection. For those deployed launchers unable to return to their RAs due to force majeure, Russia was required to provide either the coordinates of the launchers still in the field or to transport inspectors to them. This "concentration" of deployed mobile launchers has not been required by the START Treaty during reentry vehicle on-site inspections (RVOSI). During the course of START implementation, the United States has not detected any rapid

dispersal of mobile ICBMs from their bases in response to notification that a mobile ICBM base was about to be inspected.

¶5. (S) To preclude the possibility of rapid dispersal being used to impede U.S. inspectors from getting an accurate count, the current U.S. negotiating position retains the concentration provision from START. It states that all mobile ICBM systems deployed in the field must return to their RAs within 24 hours of site designation for a data update inspection. If mobile launchers have not returned, the inspection team has the choice of being transported to the location of the mobile ICBM systems that have not returned, or receive a list with the geo-coordinates for those systems.

¶6. (S) Members of the Russian delegation have been steadfast in their rejection of any "special" procedures that would apply to Russian mobile systems, particularly the U.S. proposal that would require Russia to concentrate their mobile launchers back within their assigned RAs within 24 hours of site declaration. The Russians have noted repeatedly that neither SSBNs nor heavy bombers that are deployed from their bases when inspections occur are required to return to their bases. Moreover, they openly question whether this provision is mainly designed to assist the U.S. Intelligence Community in evaluating the effectiveness of its NTM in locating Russian mobile ICBMs deployed in the field.

¶7. (S) The delegation seeks flexibility to modify or possibly to drop the requirement for concentration of deployed mobile launchers for inspections of the SOA at operational bases including the deployed nuclear warheads on them. Some delegation members believe that concentration of mobile launchers within 24 hours after site designation provides only a marginal increase in confidence that the Russian Federation has not deployed a covert mobile force. They further believe elimination of this requirement would not cause a significant degradation of confidence in verifying the numbers of mobile ICBMs.

¶8. (S) Those that support substantially modifying or dropping the concentration requirement believe that while concentration of mobile ICBM launchers back to their RAs does

provide some increase in confidence in verifying the numbers of deployed mobile ICBMs and their launchers, a determined Russian effort could obviate that gain. If a covert force had already been produced and deployed, merely concentrating a division's worth of launchers would be unlikely to help uncover the covert force. Unique identifiers (UIDs) could easily be replicated, again circumventing any benefit gained by concentration.

¶9. (S) Finally, those who hold this view also believe that if the U.S. delegation was authorized to modify or remove the requirements of this provision, along with removing the requirement to transport inspectors to mobile systems that have not returned to their RAs, this would address the Russian concerns that mobile systems are being subjected to excessive restrictions and requirements that could reduce the survivability of their mobile ICBM force in the field. Additionally, proponents of this view point out that the

Russian Federation has not shown a tendency to disperse their mobile systems to avoid inspection, so the risk of rapid dispersal in response to an imminent possible U.S. on-site inspection if the concentration provisions are removed would be low. Those who hold this view believe that were the delegation allowed to drop the concentration provision, this would remove a major obstacle to reaching agreement on the combined inspection of SOA at the mobile ICBM bases, an important U.S. objective.

¶10. (S) Others on the delegation, while supporting modification of the concentration procedure, oppose dropping the requirement altogether. They argue that, since deployed mobile ICBM systems are located inside closed, single-bay fixed structures at their bases, the United States cannot be sure, using NTM, how many mobile ICBM launchers are on the base on any given day, nor can it be sure how many launchers might deploy to the field shortly before the commencement of an inspection. If, at a minimum, deployed mobile ICBM systems are not required to return to their RAs, it could result in fewer such systems being available for inspection. In that case, there would be a significant reduction in the ability of the United States to confirm the accuracy of declared data or to verify the UIDs on a substantial sample of mobile ICBMs. Confirming UIDs is a primary means of providing confidence that the deployed mobile ICBM force is not being covertly or overtly augmented. Although it is impossible to know if Russia has any intention, or the fiscal resources needed to develop and deploy a significant covert mobile ICBM force during the life span of the SFO, Russia does have the production capability to produce additional mobile ICBMs and their launchers.

¶11. (S) Those concerned about a decision to simply drop the concentration requirement suggest that the delegation be permitted to propose a modified approach for concentrating selected mobile launchers so the regiment identified for inspection by the U.S. inspection team prior to the team's arrival in-country would be available for inspection. One possible alternative would be to require the return of all mobile ICBM launchers that departed the restricted area selected for inspection between the time the U.S. notified Russia of its intent to conduct an inspection (NRRC notification of an impending inspection is sent 16 hours prior to team's arrival at point of entry (POE)) through the implementation of pre-inspection restrictions at the designated restricted area.

¶12. (S) The new concentration approach would modify the requirement for all mobile ICBM launchers deployed in the field to return to base by limiting this required return to only those mobile ICBM launchers that had departed from their RAs up to 16 hours prior to the time when the specific mobile ICBM base was officially designated for inspection. The 16-hour interval reflects the fact that the inspected side first receives notification through the NRRC of an impending inspection from the inspecting Party 16 hours prior to the

inspection team's arrival at the POE. All mobile ICBM launchers from the designated base that had deployed to the field more than 16 hours before the designation of the inspected base would not be required to return to base, thus allowing them to continue their field deployment.

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RECOMMENDATIONS  
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¶13. (S) The delegation requests authorization to further develop and propose to the Russian side a revised version of the concentration requirement, along the lines described in paragraph 12 above. This revised approach, with its differential return-to-base requirements should discourage or simply roll back Russian rapid dispersal of mobile ICBM launchers flushed upon receipt of information that an inspection will be initiated within a matter of hours that could be focused on one of their mobile ICBM bases. At the same time, the revised concentration provision would not necessitate return to base of mobile ICBMs already in the field prior to the initial notification of an impending inspection, thus allowing them to continue their operational activities without being compelled to reveal their location and thus jeopardize what the Russians perceive to be their immediate and longer term survivability when deployed. Should the Russians prove unwilling to accept the modified concentration provision, some in the delegation would recommend dropping the concentration requirement altogether. Others reject this abandonment of some form of concentration requirement.

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GUIDANCE REQUESTED  
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¶14. (S) Delegation requests that Washington consider the recommendations contained in paragraph 13 in order to provide its response no later than OOB in Geneva on Monday, November 19.

¶15. (U) Ries sends.  
GRIFFITHS